



MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF ART
BROOKLINE & LONGWOOD AVE., BOSTON
SAT. EVE., OCTOBER 21, 1972, at 6 P.M.
PUBLIC EXHIBITION OCT. 8-21

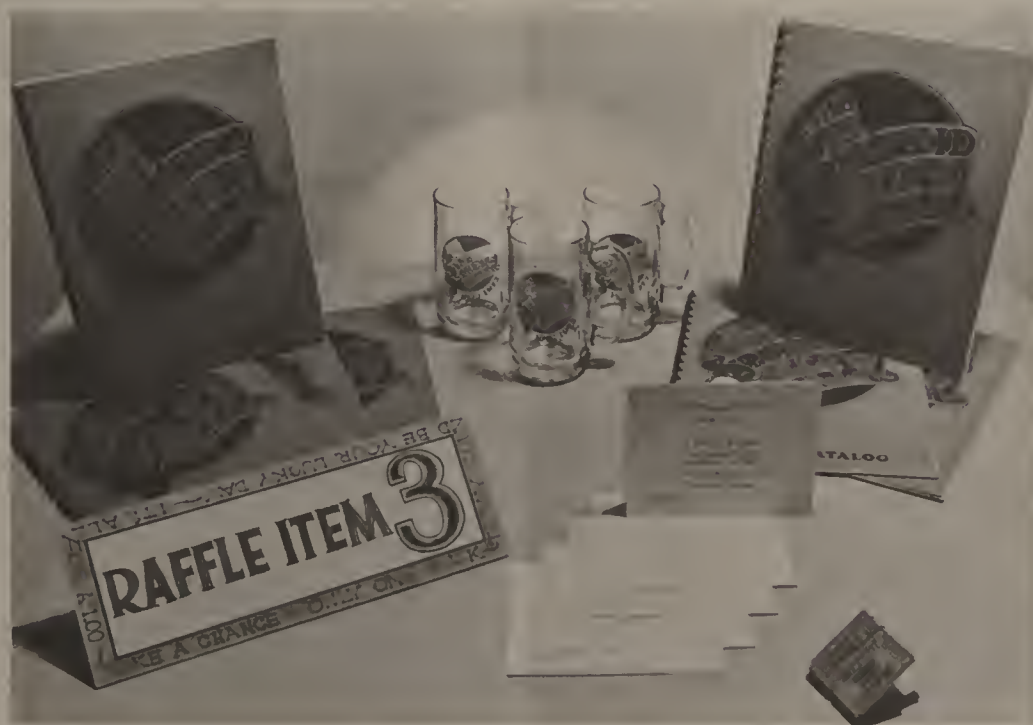
NAEA SALUTES

THE MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF ART

This year the Massachusetts College of Art is 100 years old. The NAEA is proud of the valuable contributions of this institution during these 100 years and of the important role it has played in the training of art teachers and leaders in the art education profession.

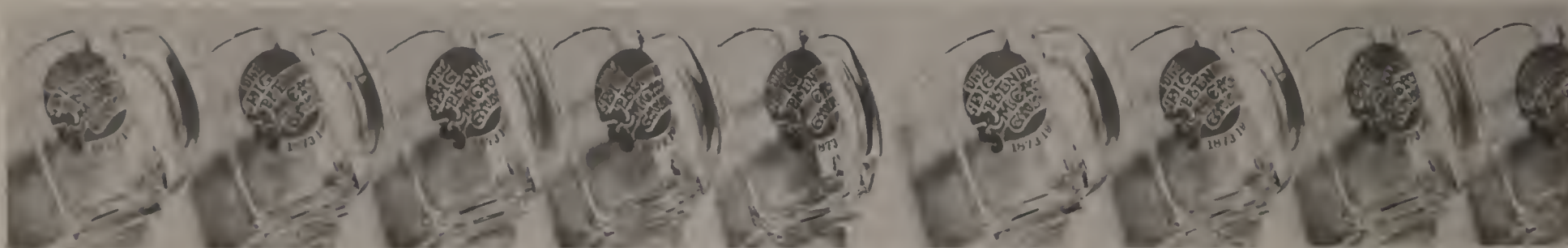
It is indeed significant that this school, as part of its centennial celebration, has donated over \$3,000.00 to the NAEA building fund, in recognition of this important undertaking for the art education profession. Realizing the importance of this building near Washington, D.C., for the future of art education in the U.S., the administration, faculty, and students of MCA undertook a major fund-raising project for the NAEA. Looking not only to the past 100 years, the Massachusetts College of Art is looking to the next 100 years, and to the need to plan for the future of the profession in which it has been such a major force.

There is a feeling of close alliance between the MCA and the NAEA, in their dedication to professional goals, in their mutual respect for the historical roots of art teacher training in the U.S., and in their deep concern for the professional association that represents art teachers. Tracing the prominent 100-year history of the Massachusetts College of Art provides a glimpse of some of the origins of American art education. When the Massachusetts legislature passed a law in 1872 making it mandatory to teach drawing in the public schools in towns of 10,000 population, a need for teachers of drawing was created. Two years later a law was passed to establish the Massachusetts Normal Art School, to train teachers of drawing. From the beginning, the school has passed through several changes, bringing it to the present position of a professional art school offering both graduate and undergraduate degrees in both fine arts and art education.



One of the most frustrating problems which the Massachusetts College of Art has faced during its long history has been the struggle to obtain land and a new building. So when the NAEA began its drive to raise funds for a building, Algalee Adams, director of graduate programs in art education at MCA, immediately identified with both the significance of the project to art education and the task of raising the money. And as a professional art educator, she felt that the Massachusetts College of Art should be an ally to the NAEA at this significant stage in the history of both institutions.

Both look back on rich professional histories, and both look forward to even greater contributions to art in education in the future. Feeling that both institutions could benefit from an activity which would strengthen this alliance, Dr. Adams conceived the idea of an art auction. Such an event would be a big one: it would bring the work of students and faculty into public attention; it would be a unifying activity for the several divisions of the college. It would provide a festive evening of activities. The attention of the public would be attracted. The students would have a chance to show and sell their work. The profits would be a financial help to the NAEA building fund. Since everyone would benefit, there was no reason to hesitate. And the ultimate aim, which was a sustaining goal through the project, was the hope that this art auction would prompt every school in the nation that educates artists and art teachers to join the movement and become "patrons" of their professional association, the NAEA.



"LET'S HAVE AN ART AUCTION"

Perhaps the experience of Algalee Adams with the MCA art auction will help to make a similar project easier for other schools. Dr. Adams found that the major ingredients of a successful art auction are the following, and that no one of these ingredients can be neglected:

1. Many art products to sell.
2. A large audience with buying ability.
3. Support and help from all segments of the college community.
4. Good organization.

Enthusiasm must be generated and sustained throughout a period of at least a month. The faculty and students especially must believe in the activity, because their help and support are essential. To begin organizing the auction, a meeting was announced to all students through a colorful flyer distributed through their mail boxes. The flyer announced the event, the purpose, and the kinds of help needed. At the opening meeting, students signed up for the type of work they were interested in doing. Two supportive faculty members cooperated in this initial meeting. Ronald Hayes of the Fine Arts Department was especially helpful by his guidance based on a previous experience of running an auction. Thomas Burke of the Graphic Design Division was responsible for advertising. Both served as auctioneers and helped in a variety of ways.

Committee chairmen met with the general chairman, Algalee Adams, decided upon their responsibilities, and developed a time table. No committee could work in isolation from the others, since there were overlapping needs. For example, the Advertising Committee could not write press releases until the Collecting Committee had notified them of persons who had agreed to contribute work to the auction, since press releases sent to local newspapers used in the lead paragraph the name of a contributing artist or committee member from that locality. Committees included the following:

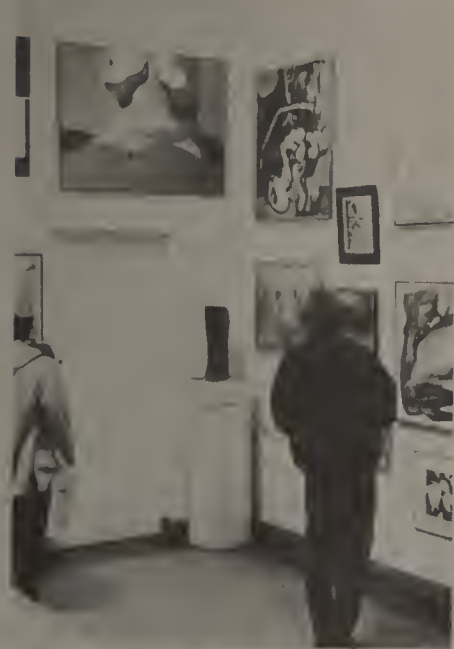
Advertising: posters, signs,
press releases, radio, TV
Collecting
Catalogue
Hanging

Raffle
Costumes and decorations
Lighting
Refreshments
Auctioneers

Runners
Registration; bidder numbers
Cashiers and record keepers

The Advertising Committee designed posters and put them on display in prominent public locations within a 30-mile radius of Boston; wrote press releases and mailed them to local newspapers; and prepared public service announcements for radio stations; arranged for Algalee Adams to make a personal appearance on a Boston TV station; prepared a large outdoor sign and constructed it at the corner of the college property where it could be viewed by both automobile and foot traffic; and sent printed invitations to 2,000 art patrons, inviting them to a preview exhibit and to the auction.

The Collecting Committee personally contacted faculty members, asking them to contribute a work to the auction. Students were invited to contribute, through posters throughout the campus and notices in their mail boxes. Near the collection date, verbal announcements were made in classrooms. The committee developed a form to be filled out in triplicate when a work was brought to the collecting area. One copy was taped to the back of the work; the second copy was given to the donor as a receipt; the third was used for preparation of the catalogue.



The Catalogue Committee compiled the list of works, assigned each a catalogue number, and made out a card showing catalogue number, artist's name, title of the work, and medium. This card was used to identify the work in the exhibit. The catalogues, which were spiral bound, with the auction logo on the cover, sold for 25¢ each. A local business firm donated \$200.00 to cover the cost of the catalogues. Acknowledgement was made in the catalogue.

The Hanging Committee arranged the exhibition in the college gallery and adjoining corridors and served as guards to supplement the regular college guards.

The Raffle Committee handled advance sales of numbered tickets on three major works donated for this purpose by the artists. Arthur Hoener, professor of design at Hampshire College and formerly chairman of the Graphic Design Department at MCA, donated a wood sculpture to be sold as a raffle item; Ronald Hayes donated a painting; and Ed McCluney donated a print. Tickets at \$1.00 each were sold throughout the two-week exhibition period as well as on the night of the auction. It is important that outstanding works be chosen for raffle items.

The Decorations Committee was responsible for all decorations in the building exclusive of the exhibition area, and for the costumes of the "Gay 90's" dance hall girls.

The Lighting Committee handled special lighting in the refreshment area; auxiliary lights for the exhibit area; and additional outside lighting for the outdoor sign, the building, and the parking lot to draw attention to the event.

The Refreshment Committee acquired and supervised the serving of refreshments. Beverages were donated by the distributor. Acknowledgements were made in the catalogue.

The Auctioneer Committee arranged for guest auctioneers to provide a change of pace, as well as relief for the key auctioneers. Two faculty members, Ronald Hayes and Tom Burke, served as the major auctioneers. If celebrities can be obtained to do a walk-on spot as an auctioneer, this can be a drawing card, as well as an interesting event for the auction evening. Artists, sports figures, theatrical figures, politicians, talk masters, or local television personalities would be good sources for such appearances. The big personality who came to the MCA art auction was Elliot Richardson, who was at that time Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare. Mr. Richardson is well known for his doodles and is an accomplished water colorist. He contributed two signed doodles, and auctioned them off himself.

It is helpful if the auctioneers are knowledgeable about art, but they should also understand the psychology and techniques of auctioneering. The rules of the auction need to be clearly understood by the bidders. Expect to let the audience get a few good buys, but the procedure must be run according to the customary auction rules. Minimum selling prices

can be discouraging to bidders, and if used, should be used very judiciously. A more effective scheme for indicating the potential value of an object is to change the size of the opening bid and the size of the bidding increments. Announce this before bidding starts on each item. If a satisfactory opening bid is not obtained right away, set the item aside and move on to the next. If you accept a second bid, the piece must be sold.

It is important to keep the activity of the auction moving. This applies to the pace of the bidding as well as to the rapid and efficient movement of the works from the exhibit area to the auction platform, and to the pick-up station after they are sold. A committee of runners, headed by a responsible faculty member, was given this assignment. Each runner moved one piece from the exhibition gallery to the auction platform, stayed there until it was sold, then moved it to the pick-up room where a student-clerk was stationed to receive it and release it to the purchaser. Several runners, each with an art work, were standing ready at the side of the stage to bring out the next item for auction. It is important to make good use of time and to keep the bidding and selling activity actively progressing in order to sell as many works as possible.



Elliot Richardson, former Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, auctions off two of his signed "doodles," at MCA Art Auction.



Girls designed "Gay 90's" costumes and served refreshments.

The Registration Committee made up registration books with each page bearing a bidder's number. Several registration desks were set up to avoid long lines and delay. As guests arrived, they registered by signing their name, address, and phone number on a page in one of the registration books. They were given a 5 x 8 card with their registration number on it in large black numerals. This card was held up as identification when bidding. The phone numbers proved essential for follow-up sales after the auction.

During the auction three recorders sat at the front of the auditorium and recorded each winning bid on the buyer's page, listing the catalogue number of the item and the closing price. When a bidder was ready to leave, he came to the recorder, picked up his registration sheets with his list of purchases, then took this to a faculty cashier who made out a bill of sale, collected the total amount due, marked the sales slip "paid," and signed it. The original copy of the sales slip was attached to the bidder's registration sheet and retained by the cashier. The bidder presented the carbon copy to the student-clerk at the pick-up station where he picked up his purchases.

As the size of the audience diminished and the hour grew late, the auction was closed. As there was unsold art work left, stickers were made available to the audience so they could place a bid on a work. This was done by writing their bidder's number and the price they were willing to pay on a sticker and attaching this to the identifying sign on the work. The next day the highest bidders were called, and the works were picked up and paid for during the following week. Many additional pieces were sold in this way. Unsold works were picked up by the artist.

During the exhibition period, viewers had the opportunity of making a sealed bid for any work. A box was provided to deposit these in. The night of the auction these bids were opened and bid for the person by one faculty member designated this responsibility. The success of the sticker bid at the close of the auction suggested that this process could be used instead of a live auction, or to supplement it in a manner similar to the sealed bid system. During the two-week exhibition period, several openings could be held with invitations sent out to a different group for each opening. Light refreshments could be served. The sticker bid system could be explained. Guests would place their bid, and since each bid price would be visible, there would be the opportunity to return and raise the bid throughout the two-week period.

The objective in such an auction as the Massachusetts College of Art held is to sell a lot of work for as much as possible and to keep the expenses at a minimum. It is important to get as many supplies and services donated as possible, in addition to the art works. College alumni and all art teachers in the area should be involved, as well as the faculty and students. The MCA offered two options to artists: either to contribute 100% of the price for which the work sold, or to contribute 50% of the selling price. A receipt for a cash contribution in the amount of the donation should be given to the artist, as this is a legal tax deduction for income tax purposes. If this is made clear to the artists, it helps in persuading them to make a 100% contribution.

The art schools in the United States could provide a building for the NAEA, if each one would conduct an art auction of the size of the one held by Algalee Adams of the Massachusetts College of Art. Aside from the obvious benefits of this project, there were experiences provided those who participated which will be valuable to their education as future art teachers: skills of organization, management, planning, public relations, and others.

Obviously this project was one of dedication and careful planning. Certainly careful organization is a must, but above all, success depends upon the genuine involvement of all concerned.

The NAEA wishes a happy birthday to the Massachusetts College of Art, and on behalf of the art teachers of the United States, says "Thank you."

